

Ella Davidson Little

IN MEMORIAM

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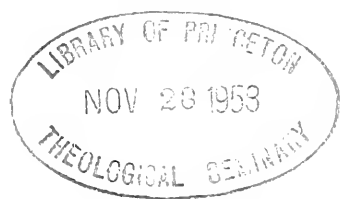


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In memoriam, Mrs. Lacy L.
Little



✓
Ella Davidson Little ✓✓

IN MEMORIAM



MRS. LACY L. LITTLE
On Her Return to China after Second Furlough

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Lacy L. Little

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."—
Daniel 12:3.

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“FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.”

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.” “Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

Ella Davidson Little went to her reward at the comparatively early age of forty-nine years. But success in the service of the King is not measured in days and months and years. There are no “time standards” by which the value of a life is gauged. Stephen’s career was brief and had a sudden and violent termination. Paul filled a goodly number of years with zealous and devoted toil. But it is thought by many that Paul was a product of Stephen’s prayer. Faithfulness is the one criterion by which the sum total of human accomplishment is reckoned. Perhaps we ought not to say “human accomplishment,” for all that is worth while in the achievements of man is simply the outworking of the divine energy in him; “it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work for His own good pleasure.”

Of the subject of this sketch it may be truly said that she was “faithful unto death.” Under the influence of her pastor, Dr. Thos. R. English, she consecrated her life to the service of the King in the “Regions Beyond,” and in 1891 went forth in the fulness of beauty and strength and enthusiasm to the land of her adoption. After a few months of intense study of the Chinese language, she entered with whole-hearted devotion upon her work of training women and girls for the privilege of Christian service. So unstintedly did she pour out her life for them that she returned to the homeland on her first furlough with greatly impaired health. A measure of rest was taken, then, under a physician’s care; but the home church was not long in finding out her charm and effectiveness in reporting conditions in China and in making appeals for help for these perishing millions. So many demands were made upon her time and energies that she came back to China but little stronger than when her furlough began.

The work in the Hangchow school for girls had been barely

resumed when the Boxer outbreak occurred, which made it necessary for practically all missionary undertakings to be suspended. When the wildest waves of violence had swept over the land and the prospect of more peaceful conditions was presented to the hosts of waiting missionaries, Miss Davidson was united in marriage to the writer of these lines, and, with characteristic devotion and courage, accompanied him to Kiangyin, which was the scene of her fruitful labors for more than fifteen years.

She was the first female missionary to whom permission was given by the American consul to enter upon active service in an interior city after the fury of the Boxer rebellion had abated. Those were days that tried the souls of God's people in China: the country was still in a chaotic condition and there was no assurance that there would not be a renewal of the deeds of violence that cost the lives of so many devoted missionaries and Chinese Christians and laid waste schools and hospitals and churches in various parts of the land. Without wavering, this faithful servant of God stood at her post and began to lay the foundations for those institutions that so filled her heart and life in the years that followed.

It was wonderful to see how the heathen hearts of the women and girls round about her responded to her magnetic appeal. Not wonderful, either, when we remember that human misery and desolation the world over are waiting for the touch of sympathy and love. These gracious gifts were lavished upon the needy ones who came in ever-increasing numbers, and so she bound them to her.

"Ask God to give thee skill
In comfort's art,
That thou mayst consecrated be
And set apart
Unto a life of sympathy.
For heavy is the weight of ill
In every heart;
And comforters are needed much
Of Christlike touch."

As exacting and varied as were the demands of the outside world, she still found time to make a bright and attractive home for her husband and to offer warm hospitality to the many missionary and Chinese friends who were glad to avail themselves of her companionship.

Such an outgiving of self for others' good must needs leave its mark upon the physical frame of this dear servant of the

King; over and over she was obliged to withdraw from active service for a season to seek new health and strength for the multitudinous duties that came to her hands. It was a sweet privilege to her husband to do what he could to shield her from needless expenditure of nervous energy and to make the burdens lighter when they came.

While on her last furlough she spent many weary weeks in a hospital, finally passing through the ordeal of a complicated operation. From this she rallied in a very gratifying way, and as soon as her strength permitted, gave herself unsparingly to the work of visiting the churches and missionary societies of the Southland in the interest of the cause so dear to heart.

Returning to China in the autumn of 1915, she received many congratulations upon her fine physical appearance. A warm welcome awaited her from the native Christians and inquirers and she once more entered with zeal and devotion upon her labors for the uplift of woman in Sinim. With unflagging energies she was faithful to her every duty until in terrible suddenness the dread disease manifested itself which within a few more months resulted in her transition to her heavenly sphere of service.

On the evening of July 6, 1916, after a period of prayer with her husband, she went quietly to sleep, and with the dawning of the following morn awakened in the "Father's House" to receive that "crown of righteousness" which the Lord of Glory has in store for all his faithful ones.

"Dead at the post of duty. 'Tis enough!
What finer eulogy! All the boast
Of pomp and glory seem but idle breath
Beside the quiet dignity of death.
Where death and duty blend—solution most
Complete of all life's problem. 'Tis enough,
Dead, and at her post!"

Lacy L. Little

MRS. LACY L. LITTLE.

By Rev. Egbert W. Smith, D. D.

Mrs. Little was one of the noblest missionaries that God ever gave to our Church, or to any church. Born and reared in a Christian home in Yorkville, S. C., at the age of twenty-four she sailed for China to give the wealth of her trained mind and loving heart to help supply the unspeakable needs of the world's greatest mission field.

For the next twenty-five years, at Hangchow and at Kiangyin, she poured out her life on the altar of missionary service with an abandon, a zeal, a joyous radiancy of spirit that made her both in China and during her two visits to the home land a source of spiritual inspiration whose ever-widening influence neither time can arrest nor eternity exhaust.

To extraordinary gifts of intellect, eloquence and leadership she added a tact, a winsomeness, a personal magnetism that drew all hearts. As a Chinese woman said, "I could not help loving Mrs. Little. It seemed just the natural thing to do."

Of the many women who have wrought for China, few have entwined themselves more tenderly in the hearts of her fellow-workers or left a more enduring record of loyal service to the Master.

A few months ago, as the end was drawing near, she sent to the native Christians at Kiangyin this message, which breathes the very secret of her own most beautiful life:

"Tell them I hope each of them will learn the great joy of living not for self, but for Him, and that there is nothing else worth while. I long for each one of them to be able to say, 'For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.'"

After weeks of suffering heroically borne, the merciful release came, and on July 7th,

"As the dawn illumed the eastern skies,
She passed through glory's morning gate
And walked in Paradise."

It is no accident that Mrs. Little was a foreign missionary. It is no mere coincidence that so many of the greatest saints and heroes of the Church of God have been foreign missionaries. Between missions and spiritual life there is a deep causal connection which we all, pastors and people, would do well to study on our knees.



ELLA DAVIDSON
When a Schoolgirl at York, S. C.

MEMORIAL SERVICE TO MRS. LACY L. LITTLE.

A large and interested congregation assembled Sabbath morning, October 22nd, in the Presbyterian Church of York to attend a special service held in memory of Mrs. Lacy L. Little, *nee* Miss Ella C. Davidson, so widely known and dearly loved as teacher, friend, and foreign missionary not only in this church, town, nation and county, but throughout the borders of the Presbyterian Church at large. The service was begun by the singing by the choir of that grand, triumphant hymn, No. 614:

"For all the saints who from their labors rest, who Thee by faith before the world confessed, Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest, Alleluia! Alleluia!"

The doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," was sung by the congregation standing. The pastor, Dr. E. E. Gillespie, led the congregation in prayer, which was followed by the singing of hymn No. 694, with its thrillingly beautiful refrain:

"Angels of Jesus, angels of light,
Singing to welcome the pilgrims of the night."

Dr. Gillespie had selected for the Scripture reading the 91st Psalm. This was Mrs. Little's favorite Psalm—the one read with her by her pastor, Dr. T. R. English, when he bade her farewell on her last trip to China; it comforted her in China when the news of her mother's death came to her in that land far from home and kindred; and it was read at the farewell meeting held for her by the Ladies' Bible Class of the York Presbyterian Church when she left us for the last time.

Dr. Egbert W. Smith, of Nashville, Tenn., the Secretary of Foreign Missions of the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church, had been invited as head of the mission work to unite with the pastor and congregation in the memorial service for Mrs. Little. Dr. Gillespie welcomed Dr. Smith and introduced him to the congregation, not only in his official capacity, but as his former and well loved pastor of the Greensboro (N. C.) Presbyterian Church. Dr. Smith offered an earnest and comprehensive prayer for Dr. Little, the family and friends of Mrs. Little, for this church and its pastor, and for the work

for which the devoted missionary had literally given her life. A missionary hymn, No. 70 of the Assembly's Song Book, "O Zion Haste," was then sung, followed by a solo, Phoebe Cary's exquisite song, "One Sweetly Solemn Thought," most sympathetically interpreted by Mrs. M. L. Carroll.

As pastor of the church, Dr. E. E. Gillespie paid a beautiful tribute to Mrs. Little and to Dr. T. R. English. His address is printed in full, as follows:

"We are assembled to-day to commemorate the beautiful character and Christlike labors of Mrs. Lacy L. Little. For a quarter of a century this church has been most faithfully and efficiently represented by her on the foreign mission field. During all this time she has merited and enjoyed the high esteem of all who ever met her, and the sincere love of those who knew her. At the age of thirteen Rev. W. W. Ratchford received her into the Bullock's Creek Presbyterian Church on profession of her faith in Christ. After a few years her parents moved to York, and she became a member of the First Presbyterian Church, of which Dr. Thomas R. English was then the beloved pastor. She was not without honor in the land of her birth and the community of her childhood. Her visits here were occasions of widespread interest throughout a large circle of friends of all denominations. She loved the town of York with its happy memories, but better still did she love her home church with its sacred and hallowed associations. As a girl of the 'teen age' she sat within these sacred walls and heard from this pulpit the clear expositions of the living word as the master mind of Dr. English unfolded the beauties of the Scriptures, bringing 'forth out of his treasure things new and old.' Imbued with the spirit of world-wide evangelization himself, he sought to lay upon the heart and conscience of his hearers the pre-eminent claims of Jesus Christ, beseeching them, as the apostle of old, to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which was their reasonable service. The vision of a lost world was held up as a challenge to the loyalty and consecration of the followers of the Christ. Great the task! Imperative the command! Faithful the promise! The 'Macedonian cry' fell not on heedless ears. Like the highly favored maiden of Nazareth, Ella C. Davidson 'kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.' The seed so faithfully sown in soil so well prepared could not fail of fruitage much and rare. In the full bloom of young womanhood, possessed of a charming personality and endowed in body, mind and heart with gifts

that meant a marked career in any chosen sphere, she laid her all at the feet of her Master, saying with the ancient prophet, 'I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me.' And the Master's response was, 'Go,' and she was not disobedient to the command divine. After two and a half decades of faithful and fruitful service her work on earth was finished. At the end of the last day she closed her eyes in slumber and her weary body rested in sweet repose. Ere the earthly morn had dawned the gentle touch of her Saviour awakened her and she opened her eyes to behold the King in his beauty and to hear from his lips the blessed plaudit, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the Lord.' And then was 'brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.' For her to depart was to be with Christ.

"For she has gone where her Redeemer is,
In that fair city on the other side,
And at the threshold of his palaces
Has loosed her sandals ever to abide.
I know her Heavenly King did smiling wait
To give her welcome when she touched the gate."

"A few quotations from letters of those who knew her will give an insight into the uplifting and sanctifying influence she ever exerted over those with whom she came in contact. One writes: 'I do not hesitate to say that I know of no woman who has returned from the foreign field that has impressed the home church as Mrs. Little has. Everyone was so glad to hear from her, from the oldest down to the little children.' Another says: 'She has gone from us, but her works do follow her. In all the number of sainted missionaries I have known, not one has more labors to follow her than Mrs. Little. To us all she was a perpetual mystery in that which she accomplished and we were constantly asking the secret of her success and we would end with a sigh over her superiority, "It is her marvelous personality." I, who lived by her side those weeks of my first summer in China, know it was her extraordinary personality plus the practice of the presence of God. Oh, I am so glad for her that she sees the face of her Lord and stands before his throne absolutely holy, absolutely happy, all the pain and weariness of this body of our humiliation passed away forever.' Still another writes: 'What a precious legacy she has left us. Everyone loved and admired her. What a splendid work she did for

the Master. Such charms and gifts and graces, and all wholly consecrated to the Saviour! We just cannot understand why one so necessary to the work out here and so richly endowed and so successful in it all should be taken away from it, and at this time. Undoubtedly there is other more glorious work for her to do where there is for her no more pain, and no more disappointment, and no more tears. How we miss her and long to see her again! I never saw her cross. She was a lovely character.' Another says: 'God has indeed given us a precious inheritance in the life and work of our departed sister. We do well to pause and meditate upon what she was, and to strive to imitate her, even as she imitated Christ. But why did God take her away right in the midst of what seemed to be the prime of her usefulness? Why did He not spare her for another quarter of a century of faithful and efficient service? We cannot tell all the reasons why. But He doeth all things well, and there is a word of consolation and of possible explanation in the words of the aged John, "His servants shall serve him." He often selects the choicest of earth for promotion to the service of heaven. The death of our sister is a call from God, a call to intensity of spirit, earnestness of purpose, indomitable perseverance, constant prayer. "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."'

"Such are the impressions made on those intimately associated with her in the great work that lay so close to the heart of the Master. Truly to us is bequeathed the precious memory and priceless heritage of a Christlike character, an example of unfaltering devotion to duty and a loyalty to Christ and his church that should inspire every child of God to higher and nobler endeavor in the service of our Lord. And who knows but she is now of the 'cloud of witnesses' surrounding us as an inspiration and example of running patiently the race set before us. Nearer than we think may be the presence of those

"We loved long since and lost awhile."

It seemeth such a little way to me
Across to that strange country—the Beyond;
And yet not strange, for it has grown to be
The home of those of whom I am so fond.
They make it seem familiar and most dear,
As journeying friends bring distant regions near.

So close it lies, that when my sight is clear
I think I almost see the gleaming strand,
I know I feel those who have gone from here
Come near enough sometimes to touch my hand.
I often think but for our veiled eyes
We should find heaven right round about us lies.

I cannot make it seem a day to dread,
When from this dear earth I shall journey out
To that still dearer country of the dead,
And join the lost ones so long dreamed about.
I love this world, yet shall I love to go
And meet the friends who wait for me, I know.

I never stand beside a bier and see
The seal of death set on some well-loved face
But that I think, "One more to welcome me
When I shall cross the intervening space
Between this land and the one 'over there';
One more to make the strange beyond seem fair."

And so for me there is no sting in death,
And so the grave has lost its victory.
It is but crossing—with abated breath
And white set face—a little strip of sea,
To find the loved ones waiting on the shore,
More beautiful, more precious than before.

Dr. Gillespie's address was followed by that of Dr. Smith.

Dr. Smith expressed his very heartfelt appreciation of the invitation to be with the York Presbyterian Church on this memorable occasion. He alluded to the fact that he did not come as a stranger, as he had, more years ago than he cared to say, taught a class in the Sunday-school of this church. "We do well to pause to-day," said Dr. Smith, "to honor the memory of one of the greatest missionaries of the Southern Presbyterian Church or of any church—Mrs. Lacy L. Little. She loved this church, she loved this town, and she loved the people of China. At the age of twenty-four years she dedicated her life to the foreign missionary work. China, one of the greatest missionary fields in the world, was chosen as the field of her labors. For more than a quarter of a century she poured out her life blood for the Chinese people. She was, as you all know, a woman of charm, tact, ability and wonderful personal magnetism, which, joined to her deep spirituality and absolute consecration to the cause of the Christ, made her a power in the work. To know her was to respect, to admire, and to love her. A Chinese woman has well expressed the universal feeling,

'I could not help loving Mrs. Little. It seemed the natural thing to do.' Her character was symmetrically developed, her mind strong and finely balanced, her judgment rarely sound, and executive powers of a high order. In Christian education she was a pioneer in China. She accomplished a work along constructive educational lines for girls and women in China that is unequalled in our mission history. That same grace, beauty and sympathy which won the hearts of the Chinese was equally potent in the homeland. On her three furloughs home so many and insistent were the demands for her to visit societies, Presbyteries and churches that strength and time could not suffice to fulfil the engagements. Only eternity can tell of the rich harvests gathered from her faithful sowing. Her last message to her loved Kiangyin people was Pauline in its character. 'Tell them I long for them all to be able to say, For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.' At Shanghai, China, July 7, 1916, as the dawn was brightening the Eastern sky her pure spirit passed to 'where beyond these voices there is peace.' Why, we ask, did God take her to Himself just at the zenith of her usefulness? Is it not that He so often calls from earth the choicest and most perfect spirits for the higher service? I pray that many of the young hearts of this church may be inspired by her radiant, consecrated life and labors to follow in her footsteps. May we all so live that when the summons comes to us the Master can say as he did to her, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' "

MRS. LACY L. LITTLE.

By Rev. P. F. Price, D. D.

When the news came that Mrs. Little had passed from earth to her home on high, the first thought that came into my mind were the words of the Apostle Paul, "Our sister, a servant of the church" (Rom. 16:1), and the second were the words of the Apostle John in the Apocalypse, "His servants shall serve him" (Rev. 22:3).

The first describes her as we have known her through the years—our sister, Ella Davidson Little, a faithful servant of the church.

And the second, the words of John describe her as she has been since the 7th of July, our sister still, but promoted to larger service in the presence of the King.

Mrs. Little, who was Miss Ella Davidson, was born at Bullock's Creek, near Yorkville, S. C., on March 25, 1867, in the same year in which the Southern Presbyterian Mission was founded in Hangchow, China. In her veins flowed the blood of some of the oldest families of the State. Her father was Samuel L. Davidson, a member of the Presbyterian Church, and her mother Elizabeth Walker Davidson, a member of the Methodist Church. She combined both the strength of her father's and the fervor of her mother's faith. Rev. Thos. R. English, D. D., the beloved pastor of the church at Yorkville, S. C., afterward the honored professor of English Bible in Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., was instrumental in giving to "Miss Ella," as he always affectionately called her, a vision of the foreign field, and he was ever her counsellor and friend. Warm friends were these two, the aged pastor and his young parishioner, and not far apart have they gone to be with the Lord, for Dr. English died about two years ago. A number of friends have spoken of the happy renewal in the other world of the fellowship which they enjoyed while on earth.

Miss Davidson attended the Wesleyan Female College in Staunton, in the beautiful Valley of Virginia, a city of schools and seminaries, and from thence she was graduated. After-

ward she taught in the Yorkville graded schools. Thus by training and experience in church and in school she was fitted for the work she was destined to do in China.

She came to the China field in 1891, arriving on October 20th. She resided first at our oldest mission compound in the city of Hangchow, and after a period of language study, she took charge of the T'ien Swe Gyao Girls' School, being the fourth of a succession of principals who had served since the founding of the school in 1869. The first was Mrs. Randolph; the second, Mrs. John L. Stuart; the third, Miss Essie E. Wilson, who became Mrs. P. Frank Price; the fourth, Miss Ella Davidson. Miss Davidson was in active connection with the girls' school about seven years. During that time she had many girls under her care, most of them now wives and mothers in Christian families. These carry in their hearts an abiding affection for their former teacher, and in their lives the impress of her work. Their love of her is illustrated by the remark of one of them, now in Nanking, the wife of one of the elders there, who on hearing of Mrs. Little's serious illness, said: "I just loved Mrs. Little. It always seemed the natural thing to do." Another of her pupils was Mrs. Li Gyang-wo, now a widow, whose husband (who died in 1912) was an earnest preacher of the gospel. Mrs. Li has been Mrs. Little's faithful co-worker in Kiangyin for a number of years. Having been taught by Mrs. Little as a girl and trained by her as a woman, Mrs. Li is peculiarly fitted to aid in carrying forward the work of her departed teacher and friend. Mrs. Lacy Little lives and labors through Mrs. Li Gyang-wo.

After a residence of about nine years in Hangchow, Miss Ella Davidson was, on October 31, 1900, married to Rev. Lacy L. Little. This union was altogether fitting, so admirably did kindred spirits aid and supplement each other. Mrs. Little, on her removal to Kiangyin, where Mr. Little had labored since 1895, entered heart and mind into the work of the station. Whenever the history of that station shall be written, it will be found that a long chapter must be given to the work of Mrs. Ella Davidson Little.

The two children which were born to Mr. and Mrs. Little died in tender infancy. Thus, having no domestic responsibilities beyond the care of her home and her husband, Mrs. Little was able to give herself without distraction to the work of the Lord. While co-operating with Mr. Little in his evangelistic work, keeping open home for all who came from town or country, she gave constant time and thought to work among

the girls and women. She founded the Luola Murchison Sprunt Academy for Girls and the Willie Moore Bible Training Home for Women. The girls' academy has become one of the fixed educational institutions of our mission work in China. Having been established in much prayer, with the gifts of consecrated Christian workers in Wilmington, N. C., and by the devoted labors of Mrs. Little, the school is sure to go on in ever-increasing usefulness. Its management will sadly miss the labors and counsels of its founder and first principal, yet what she gave to it while she lived will be one of its most valued assets, even now when she is gone.

The Willie Moore Bible Training School for Women was the first school of its kind within our two missions in China and one of the first within the two provinces which we occupy. The vision which Mrs. Little saw has since been glimpsed by others who are also realizing the possibilities of the education of women in Bible Schools. But however much such schools multiply, we will not forget that Mrs. Little first showed the way in the face of many difficulties. She was our pioneer in the establishment of Training Schools for women workers.

It was not in a month or a year that the work was done. It is stated in the bi-monthly bulletin of ten years ago that there were sixty women connected with the school. Two years later ninety-odd were enrolled, and so the work grew by degrees. I have a mental picture of the commencement exercises in 1912, which it was the privilege of Mrs. Price and myself to attend. The hall was filled with women and girls, five hundred strong, including pupils and the friends and neighbors of pupils. Some of the girls were from Christian and some from heathen homes; some of the women were preparing for Christian service and some were merely inquirers after the truth; but all manifested remarkable training and all cheerfully responded to one controlling will, and that the will of one woman, Mrs. Little. Mrs. Little had a "way" about her of getting other people to do as she wished and yet making them glad to do it.

She was uniformly cheerful. A friend remarked of her, "Whoever saw Mrs. Little without her smile?" She carried the spirit of gladness into all that she did, no matter how great the strain and stress. And yet, known only to those most intimate with her, she had continually to fight against ill health. Again and again she passed through severe illness. At such times the 91st Psalm was very precious to her. Before passing into unconsciousness just before a serious operation during her

last furlough, she had her husband read to her this Psalm. How sweetly its cadences fell upon the sufferer's ear, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in him will I trust," and so on to the end. Thus, through suffering and ill health, most of the time and untiringly at all times, with God for her help, she pressed on to do great things for Him. The founder of the Polytechnic Institute in London, being asked one day by someone who was looking at the buildings, "What was the cost of all these?" replied, "One man's life blood." If you ask what was the cost of the girls' academy and the women's training home in Kiangyin, the reply is, "One woman's life blood."

Not alone in China did Mrs. Little do a notable work. She had the quality that not all missionaries have of making her message acceptable to the home churches. Rev. R. Murphy Williams, of Greensboro, N. C., writes of her: "I do not hesitate to say that I know of no woman who has returned from the foreign field that has impressed the home church as Mrs. Little has. Everyone was so glad to hear from her, from the oldest down to the little children." She was ever in demand, having calls in every direction that taxed her even beyond her strength. This was true of her recent furlough as of those before. Mr. and Mrs. Little went to the home country in the spring of 1913, after eight years' service, neither of them then very strong. They returned to China September 1, 1915, refreshed as they hoped, and ready for another term of work. But Mr. Little had a serious breakdown in the winter, extending over three months, during which time Mrs. Little nursed him back to health. Later Mrs. Allison was seriously ill and of this time she writes: "I shall never forget all the little kindnesses Mrs. Little showered upon me during my illness and before she herself was taken ill."

In the early spring Mrs. Little paid a visit to Soochow, and friends who saw her there speak of how bright and well she seemed to be and how hopefully she looked forward to new plans for work. The troubles seemed to be over. The furlough was gone, Mr. Little was restored to health, she herself seemed stronger than for years past. But God moves in a mysterious way. Serious internal disorders developed which necessitated a journey to Shanghai for medical attention. She was accompanied by Mr. Little and by Dr. Worth, the beloved family physician and friend. But after an explorative

operation the Shanghai doctors could give no hope. Though under the most skillful treatment and careful nursing at the Red Cross Hospital, all that she, humanly speaking, could hope for was to patiently await the end. But even this dark providence had a silver lining. Rev. George Hudson, who for years has been suffering from the disease with which Mrs. Little died, wrote to Mr. Little: "We cannot but rejoice for her, because all her conflict and sufferings are over, and she stands forever in the presence of the Saviour she loved so ardently and served so devotedly here on earth. Moreover, she is saved from a long endurance of what I believe to be the most acute pain a human being can suffer, and you, my dear brother, are spared the anguish of witnessing for months and years agony you are powerless to relieve." And among other things, Mr. Hudson adds, "For myself, it cannot be a great while now before I join her in front of the great white throne."

In these months, in the face of certain death, Mrs. Little's faith triumphed. For herself she was confident and resigned. For others she was thoughtful. In a letter which she dictated to the Christians at Kiangyin she wrote of herself: "Tell them that the Father never makes any mistakes in placing His workers. I loved to work with them there and had many plans, but the Father wants me to serve Him elsewhere. Tell them that it is most beautiful to be going home, although I am sorry to be leaving them. Ask them to pray very earnestly that the Father will make it my joy to do His will, and that I may be able to rejoice even when the way leads through the crucible of pain. Tell them to ask the Father to be as merciful to me as He thinks best."

Then followed many loving exhortations, among them these words, which much impressed them all: "I long for each one of them to be able to say, 'For to me to live is Christ, to die is gain.'" To her own people in the home land she writes a message very sacred to them all:

"You are precious to my soul beyond all expressing, and it grieves me to think of the sorrow that the knowledge of my condition will bring into your hearts and lives. I had thought to be so helpful to you by my prayers; but the doctors tell me that the dear Father is going to take me home. This means the end of earthly service and prayer; but, oh, it means the entrance into life—abundant life—and glad, joyous service in the home above. We cannot know just what this service will be, but

would it not be natural that a part of it might be given to those of you who are so dear to my heart?

"Be very faithful to each other by remembering each other in prayer. I want to send special messages to each one, but I have not strength.

"Be not deceived by the world and the many seductive attractions thereof. Let Christ be the center of your life around whom everything else revolves. And, in all and every circumstance, live for his service and for his name's honor and glory."

At times she longed to go. At one time she said, "Home, sweet home. The Master is near. I see him, and yet something keeps me from him." At last, on the early morning of July 7th, while asleep, her spirit took its flight and her weary body was at rest. Almost her last words on the evening before had been a prayer for her loved ones.

Mrs. Little's death called forth many expressions of grateful remembrance from those who had been helped and influenced by her.

This is the refrain of a number of letters which, through the kindness of Mr. Little, I have been privileged to see.

A young man writes from Wake Forest, N. C., "I only saw her (Mrs. Little) once, and that was when she was in Chapel Hill at Mrs. Archer's, just after she had attended the Orange Presbytery at Burlington. It was a very bad day. The ground was covered several inches with snow and she and I sat by a huge wood fire and talked all day. It was the most perfect and beneficial day I have ever spent and I think my life will witness to that fact. I have often thought it was Providence that sent me around to Mrs. Archer's that day." It was like Mrs. Little to give a whole day to a careless college boy.

But as much as we rejoice in what Mrs. Little did, it is the memory of what she was that is our priceless heritage. Christ has given through his Church apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, all faithful workers. These were his ascension gifts and they are our choicest possessions. And as the years go by we shall realize that the things that have meant most to our enterprise in China are not our policies or our institutions, but the kind of workers sent out by the home church. They it is who determine more than anything else the nature of the church that we are planting on heathen soil.

One of the most cherished gifts that our Lord has given to our work in China is the life service of Mrs. Lacy Little. She was a singularly well-rounded missionary. Added to personal

attractiveness was charm of manner. Added to intellectual equipment was a deep and fervent piety. She was a tireless worker, but always cheerful and hopeful. Many of her friends recall her winsomeness. Whether in the home land or in mission circles or among the Chinese she always drew people to her. A loving wife, a charming hostess, a tireless worker and a faithful friend, she was one of whom we can truly say that we thank God upon every remembrance of her.

Mrs. Little had a rare quality of leadership. She did her full share of hard work, but while working hard herself, she had the faculty which not all hard workers had of getting others also to work. She naturally took the place of leadership among the Chinese women and girls and they as naturally fell into line, recognizing in her a born leader of women. Nor did she lead by force of command or superior position, but by the force of her own personality. And she was always ready to accord to others the credit of achievement in which she had the principal part. I asked one of Mrs. Little's nearest friends in our mission circle what, to her mind, was Mrs. Little's most outstanding characteristic. After thinking it over for a day, this lady gave me her reply. It was in effect that there were so many lovely qualities that could be mentioned that it was hard to single out any one, but to the mind of this friend the one thing that, after all, impressed her most, was that Mrs. Little was, as she expressed it, an "encourager." She was always helping people along. She would sympathize with some old woman in her trouble, or advise and counsel some wayward schoolgirl, or influence some young man toward the decision of his life work. She was a strong influence in the decision for the ministry of the young man whose election as professor in the Nanking Seminary was confirmed by the mission yesterday morning. She dispensed the milk of human kindness and was always ready with a sympathetic word.

A characteristic that hundreds will remember her gratefully for was her love for the Chinese people. She loved them all, and she loved them always. It was for them that she spent herself, even to the last ounce of her endurance. She planned for them and she prayed for them. While it was her longing desire during the last weary months to depart and be with Christ, yet she would have been willing to abide in the flesh if thereby she could have benefited them.

She has gone from us, but her works do follow her. Miss Mildred Watkins wrote to Mr. Little: "In all the number of

sainted missionaries I have known, not one has had more labors to rest from, more works to follow her, than your wonderful wife. To us all she was a perpetual mystery in that which she accomplished and we were constantly asking the secret of her success and we would end with a sigh over her superiority, 'It is her marvelous personality!' I, who lived by her side those weeks of my first summer in China, know it was her extraordinary personality plus the practice of the presence of God. Oh, I am so glad for her that she sees the face of her Lord and stands before his throne absolutely holy, absolutely happy, all the pain and weariness of this body of our humiliation passed away forever."

Dr. William F. Junkin also wrote: "What a precious legacy she has left us. Everyone loved and admired her. What a splendid work she did for the Master. Such charms and gifts and graces, and all wholly consecrated to the Saviour! We just cannot understand why one so necessary to the work out here and so richly endowed and so successful in it all should be taken away from it, and at this time. Undoubtedly there is other more glorious work for her to do where there is for her no more pain and no more disappointment and no more tears."

God has indeed given us a precious inheritance in the life and work of our departed sister. We do well to pause and meditate upon what she was, and to strive to imitate her, even as she imitated Christ. But why did God take her away right in the midst of what seemed to be the prime of her usefulness? Why did He not spare her another quarter of a century of faithful and efficient service? We cannot tell all the reasons why. But he doeth all things well, and there is a word of consolation and of possible explanation in the words of the aged John, "His servants shall serve him." He often selects the choicest of earth for promotion to the service of heaven. Thinking of such service, Miss Watkins said again, "When my mother left me my greatest sense of loss was that never again would I love her here. A reply made to this wail was, 'Her love is still living, not only living, but since she has awaked in his likeness her love is fuller and deeper. She knows now how to pray for you, for she is with our great Intercessor. You have lost only the conscious expression of her love.' These words helped me, for their truth was self-evident. Among the 'cloud of witnesses' watching us is one whose heart is concentrated in our attaining the goal and obtaining the crown."

Or, as Dr. Henry Drummond puts it, she was "like a work-

man, laying down his tools at the close of the day's toil, to take them up in another and far more wondrous workshop."

Mrs. Little was the thirty-first worker from among our China missionaries that has been called away by death—thirty-one workers in forty-nine years. One by one, they are gathering home, some like Miss Fleming, of whom we have just heard, of full age like a shock of corn cometh in his season, some like Mrs. Little in the prime of life, and some just at the beginning of their service. Who will be next? Are we ready? Ready as our sister was; ready like the great apostle to the Gentiles? What a wonderful word that word "ready" was with him! "I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also"; "I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus"; "I am ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." Are we also ready? The death of our sister is a call from God, a call to intensity of spirit, earnestness of purpose, indomitable perseverance, constant prayer. "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

IN MEMORIAM—MRS. LACY L. LITTLE.

By Mrs. Mary H. Stuart.

It was a life of more than ordinary beauty and usefulness that went out when Mrs. Lacy L. Little passed away on July 7, 1916, in the Red Cross Hospital at Shanghai; and her missionary work, extending over more than a quarter of a century in China, deserves more than a passing notice. Having been one of the first to welcome her to this land, and having been intimately associated with her during her first term of service, the writer can truly say that she has rarely known a more attractive, consecrated young woman than Miss Ella C. Davidson when she came to us in answer to a call for a teacher to the Girls' Boarding School in Hangchow. She was born near Yorkville, S. C., on March 25, 1867, and thus was twenty-four years old when she came to China in 1891. She was a graduate of the Wesleyan Female College in Staunton, Va., and taught for several years in the graded school of her native city, which gave her some experience for her new work. She came to us with the zeal and enthusiasm of one who was consecrating her young life to China, and to the end she never lost her first love. At once she began to equip herself for her work by untiring efforts to get hold of the language, and to make herself acquainted with everything that would help her in the school work. In a few years she had taken entire charge of the school as principal, and was exerting an unbounded influence over those young women committed to her care. Not satisfied with this limited sphere, her heart went out to the women in the neighborhood; and she began to devise means to reach them with the gospel, as well as to encourage the girls in efforts for the good of others. To this end she began a series of evangelistic meetings once a week in the assembly room of the school, by special effort inviting in the women living near the school. These were not without direct results, but the best effect was on the girls themselves, who thus began to take an active part in work for others, and get a training that was most useful to them in after years. During this term of service she met with two great



ELLA C. DAVIDSON
On Her Return to China after First Furlough

sorrows, one of them being the loss of a beloved mother, which gave her a great shock; but she rallied from them to more devoted service, ripened by the experience, and giving herself more entirely to the Chinese.

In the spring of 1898, as the time for her first furlough was drawing near, she had the misfortune to have an attack of ophthalmia, which caused her intense suffering and great inconvenience, and became a real menace to her eyesight. So it was decided for her to go at once to the homeland, somewhat sooner than she had planned. Here she was hardly allowed to recover from this affliction before calls began to come to her from all quarters to address meetings of various kinds, and during the whole time of her stay in the homeland she was kept busy answering these demands. Her striking personality, added to an intense earnestness, made her a most attractive speaker, so that crowds came to hear her and were deeply moved by her strong appeals for the work in China. Few of our lady missionaries have done more strenuous and successful work than Miss Davidson did on this her first season of rest in the homeland.

Returning to China in December, 1899, she at once resumed her place in the girls' school, full of new ideas for its improvement, which she at once began to put into practice; but these were all cut short by the Boxer outbreak in 1900, when the school was closed, and we were all forced to flee to Shanghai for a long exile of nine months. She never returned to Hangchow as a worker, for on October 31, 1900, she was married in Shanghai to Rev. L. L. Little, and from that time to the end her field of work was with her husband in Kiangyin. Here we find her manifesting the same active and intelligent interest that had characterized her from the beginning. Under her direction one kind of work after another was opened up, until we find now at the close of her sixteen years in that field a large boarding school for girls, a Bible training school for women, and many direct activities in evangelistic work. She was fortunate in having devoted associates, both among foreigners and Chinese, who kept the work going whether in her presence or absence; but all seemed to look to her for help and advice as the center and inspiration of the work. Two visits to the homeland only made them realize how much she meant to their station; so when she returned from the United States last September after an absence of about two years in apparent health and strength for another long term of service, it was a time for spe-

cial rejoicing and congratulation. She did enter upon her work with the usual zeal and energy, and was planning many things for the development of the work, though straining under the burden even now too heavy. Her body was already beginning to give way under the insidious workings of the terrible disease that had fastened itself upon her: but she still went on, working. Although there was no outward manifestation as yet, she seemed to know that something was not right with her and she was frequently heard to exclaim: "I look all right, but I am not feeling well." This was the only indication, however, until some time in April, when she was forced to lie down for a while each day and from that time on the friends at the station began to realize that something very serious was the matter. Still less were they prepared for the sudden breakdown, when she was carried to Shanghai in a very low condition about May 1st, or for the crushing decision of the doctors that she had only a short time to live. To those of us who had not known of any failure in her health, this news came as a great shock, and we could not believe that her condition was really hopeless. Everywhere "prayer was made without ceasing unto God for her," and many of her friends hoped to the last that it might still be God's will to give her back to us. It did seem as if she must be spared to the work and to those who loved her so much. The answer came to our prayers in the continued progress of the disease, the "outward man perishing day by day, the pain and weakness increasing, until the call came to her early on the morning of July 7th, and our beloved friend was released from the suffering body, to be forever with the Lord." We can only praise God that the agony of the human frame was not continued longer, but we still wonder why it had to be, why she had to leave us at all. For her we can only rejoice over the "Well done, good and faithful servant," which we feel sure awaited her on her entrance to the heavenly city, and for the crown of victory that now adorns her brow. We cannot call her back, but we can catch the inspiration of her beautiful life and try to carry out the ideals which she gave us. Of the many women who have wrought for China, few have entwined themselves more tenderly in the hearts of all her fellow-workers or left a more enduring record of faithful, loving service to the Master. Words fail us to express the deep sense of personal loss, or measure the depth of sorrow in the heart of him who is now left desolate; but this tribute of love and respect to her memory may feebly convey some idea of what her loss means

to her friends and fellow-workers and to the whole missionary community in China.

Sleep on, beloved, sleep and take thy rest:
Lay down thy head upon thy Saviour's breast;
We loved thee well, but Jesus loved thee best.
Good night!

Only "good night," beloved, not "farewell,"
A little while, and all His saints shall dwell
In hallowed union, indivisible—
Good night!

Until we meet again before His throne,
Clothed in the spotless robes He gives His own,
Until we know, even as we are known—
Good night!

MRS. ELLA DAVIDSON LITTLE.

An Appreciation by Mrs. Hugh W. White.

Alas, alas! is the cry of my heart. Alas, alas! for the friend of my heart, for my sister in Christ, for the devoted wife, the perfect home-maker, the efficient organizer and worker; for the teacher, friend and guide of many generations of school-girls, for the spiritual mother of many of "these from the land of Sinim!"

Twenty-five years ago she went to China at the age of twenty-four. Thus more than half her life was devoted to China.

When I went to Hangchow, twenty-three years ago, she had already been in full work for a year. Her lovely person and charming personality, her ability in managing all kinds of affairs, from those of the kitchen to those of the soul and of the heart, made her at that time a power in the work; and such she has been increasingly ever since. What she was to me in those early days no one knows. For three years we were bosom friends, then came changes; we were separated, and our paths have only occasionally touched for a few days at a time in these twenty years.

We missionaries are very closely thrown together in any station or mission. Foibles as well as virtues stand out in bold relief, and sometimes the former seem more pointed than the latter. So in those days I heard various criticisms of various persons; but never heard "Miss Davidson" criticized. Of how many of us can that be said?

I have often thought of her as the perfection of a woman; not in a mere lack of faults, but by virtue of a warm, loving, attractive, helpful, self-effacing, devoted nature, an overwhelming love for Christ and his work, and a thoroughly well-balanced mind and well-rounded character. I do not know of her superior in all our mission.

Such a worker taken away in her prime, out of the midst of her abounding work! Such a life cut short! Oh, that unanswerable question, Why?

We can only remember, with racked hearts, that "Christ

leads us through no darker room than he went through before," and that to her was given the honor of treading, in some measure, the path the Saviour trod—the busy life, happy, yet shadowed with sorrow, the premature death, the agonizing end. Alas, alas! is the natural cry of my heart; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, it can be changed to a song of thanksgiving for the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory which is hers through the grace of her well-beloved Master.

MRS. ELLA DAVIDSON LITTLE.

Mrs. Ella Davidson Little "entered into rest" on the morning of July 7th at Shanghai, China. The Ladies' Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church of York, S. C., desires to place on record its appreciation of Mrs. Little as a loyal member of the society, a beloved and efficient missionary and a woman of unusual character and consecration. Mrs. Little—then Miss Ella Davidson—was a charter member of the society, and, though separated from us by great distance for many years, remained until her death a loyal member, always interested in the welfare of the Society—and always our inspiration.

A short time after the organization of the Society Miss Davidson volunteered for the foreign field and was sent to China by the York Presbyterian Church. It was the high privilege of this church to support Miss Davidson until her marriage to Mr. Little, when she was transferred to Kiangyin, which station was entirely supported by the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmington, N. C. While we reluctantly yielded the financial support of Mrs. Little, we never gave up our claim to her personally, and we still regarded her as our representative in the foreign field. We were justly proud of this daughter of our church, and she was always spoken of as "our beloved missionary." In sending one of its members to the foreign field, the interest of our church in missions was deepened, for we felt we had a definite share in the "reaping" of the "field white unto the harvest." Having this representative in the field, and being blessed with missionary pastors, ours has indeed become a missionary church.

Mrs. Little's visits to the homeland were occasions of great happiness to her loved ones and to hundreds of her friends throughout the Southland. Her presence with us at our missionary meetings were red-letter days in the history of our Society. Those of us who had the great privilege of being at those meetings and of listening to the message she brought to us, will carry through life blessed memories of those golden hours when Mrs. Little told in her own wonderful way of her work in China—of the glorious victories won for Christ, and of the press-



ELLA DAVIDSON LITTLE

In 1900

ing needs and great opportunities of this land of her adoption. She gave us a world-wide vision of the missionary enterprise under the leadership of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as we listened to this consecrated woman, we "took knowledge of her that she had been with Jesus," heaven seemed a little nearer, and the peace of God rested upon our hearts as gently as the Summer twilight.

Those closely associated with Mrs. Little in her work in the foreign field have already borne living testimony to her "faithfulness unto death" to the Master's work, to her inspiring leadership, and to her peculiar fitness for being the bearer of "glad tidings of good things." To know and to do the will of God was the supreme thought of her life and the dominant note of her life was the joy of service.

Beautiful, gifted, radiant, tactful and wisely helpful to all with whom she came in contact, she was the embodiment of all that is best and loveliest in Christian womanhood. Love, strength, gentleness, faith and loyalty were some of the beautiful traits of her character. No one who ever met her failed to feel the charm of her personality.

Always to us she seemed as one set apart.

As woman, as friend, as daughter, as sister, as wife, she brought only happiness, she gave only joy.

May we follow her example as she followed Christ—and may we find in her life inspiration for service and noble living. "She being dead, yet speaketh."

To the bereaved husband in his loneliness and sorrow, to the aged father, to the brothers and sisters, and to all those bound to her by the ties of kinship, we extend our tender sympathy, and we pray that they may realize the truth of the promise: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Lesslie D. Witherspoon	}	Committee.
Margaret A. Gist		
Alice W. O'Leary		

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Wilmington, N. C.

It is with a sense of deep sorrow and irreparable loss that the Session of the First Presbyterian Church records the death of Ella Davidson Little.

Mrs. Little was a faithful and successful teacher, a loyal friend, an efficient and inspiring leader. While we rejoice in her happiness, we can but mourn the loss of one so richly endowed with all the qualities of an earnest and devoted missionary whose labors have borne abundant fruit.

Her cultured mind and sweet, gentle nature, developed by self-denying service, gave her a well-rounded character with wisdom to discern true values, and she joyously gave all her talents—a royal gift—to the crying needs of China's unhappy millions.

Her life influenced and gladdened all those it touched, and so full was she of the spirit of the Master that those near her realized new beauties in him as they were reflected in her life.

Therefore, be it resolved that we express to her husband and her family our deep sympathy in their sorrow, assuring them that the memory of her beautiful life and of the work she has wrought will abide with us in the home church. And, in much love, we commend them to the Master whom she served and to the blessed Comforter he sends to his sorrowing children.

Mokanshau, September 1, 1916.

Rev. Lacy L. Little.

My Dear Mr. Little:

In accordance with the wishes of the Woman's Conference of the Mid-China Mission, I am sending you a copy of the following resolutions passed at the recent meeting of August 25th.

Very truly yours,

Martha Cecil Wilson,
Secretary.

Whereas, God in His infinite love and wisdom has seen fit to call unto Himself one of our number, Mrs. L. L. Little, we as a Woman's Conference desire to express before the Mission our love and esteem for her and our sense of loss at her going, and to ask that the following resolutions be placed upon the minutes of the Mission:

Resolved, that in the passing to her rest of our beloved friend and co-worker, Mrs. Little, our Woman's Conference has sustained a real loss which we feel most keenly.

Resolved, that we her fellow-workers bespeak our appreciation of her and her faithful and untiring service in the different fields in which she has labored.

Resolved, that we express to all the dear ones who survive her our loving sympathy in the sorrow that has come to them, praying that the God of all comfort may minister to them.

CHINESE MEMORIAL SERVICE.

A service was held by the Christians of the East Gate Church, Kiangyin, in loving memory of the dear friend who had gone out from their midst to her heavenly home. The church auditorium had been elaborately decorated with flowers and scrolls and Chinese emblems of mourning and was well filled with a representative audience, consisting not only of the Christian constituency, but of outside friends from the various elements of society in the city and round about.

The order of exercises was quite an extensive one, including a sketch of the life of the deceased, addresses, Chinese poems, musical contributions from the two schools, and a quartette composed of four ladies from our own missionary staff. The whole service was a touching and beautiful expression of the esteem and affection in which this devoted friend of the Chinese was held by all elements of the population.

—L. L. L.



MRS. LACY L. LITTLE

Principal of Kiangyin Girls' School and the Bible School for Women

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT ADOPTED BY THE WINNIE
DAVIS CHAPTER, U. D. C.

Again has the death angel visited our Chapter and taken a beloved honorary member.

On Friday, July 7, 1916, Mrs. Lacy L. Little, of Kiangyin, China, answered the summons to "Come up higher," and went to join the redeemed in heaven.

Therefore, be it resolved—

1. That by her death our Chapter has sustained a great loss.
2. That the memory of her useful Christian life and the glorious, triumphant ending of that life will ever be an inspiration to us.
3. That we extend to her beloved ones, at home and abroad, our heartfelt sympathy in their loss and commend them to the love of our Father in heaven, "who doeth all things well."
4. That these resolutions be written in our records and copies sent to her husband and family.

Annis R. O'Leary, Chairman.
Mrs. Nannie G. Allison.
Miss Mary E. Williams.

FROM MINUTES OF MID-CHINA MISSION,
ANNUAL MEETING, 1916.

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Ella Davidson Little

Born

Near Yorkville, South Carolina,

March 25, 1867

Arrived in China

October 20, 1891

Nine Years Faithful and Fruitful Service in the

Hangchow Girls' School

Married Rev. Lacy L. Little

October 31, 1900

Founder and First Principal of the Woman's Bible Training

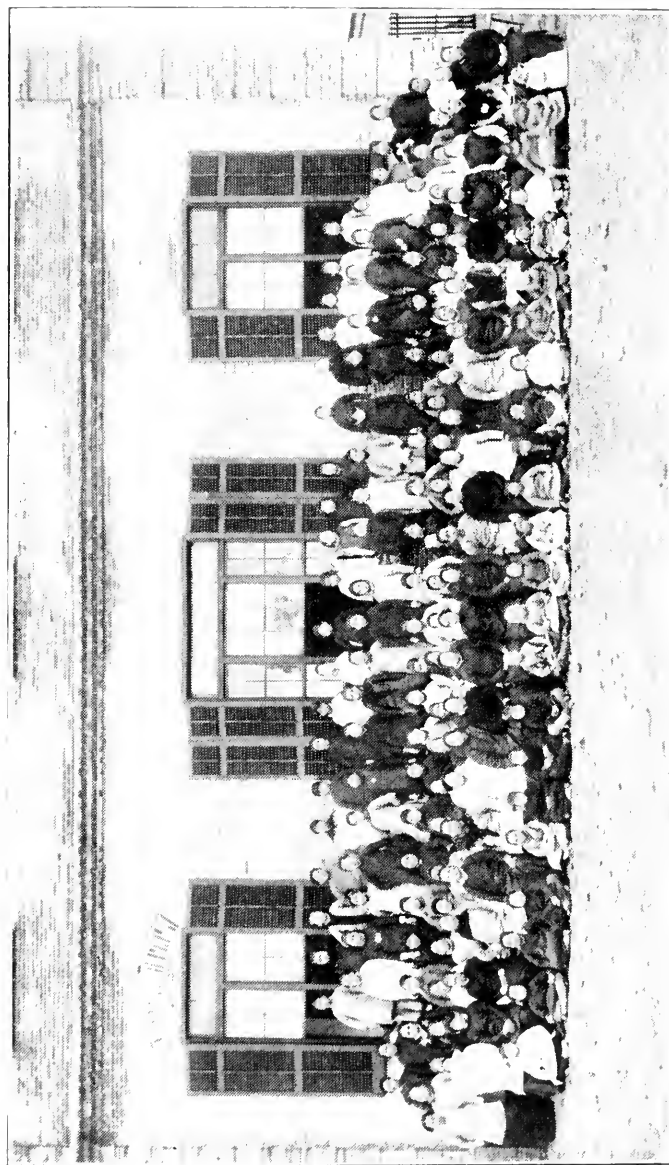
School and Girls' School at Kiangyin

DIED

At Shanghai, China, July 7, 1916

"A Servant of the Church"

"His Servants Shall Serve Him."



WOMEN, GIRLS AND CHILDREN UNDER CARE OF MRS. L. L. LITTLE AT KIANGYIN, CHINA

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